



Western Interstate  
Commission for  
Higher Education (WICHE)  
(includes Alaska and Hawaii)

# A WESTERN COMPACT

## A REPORT ON CALIFORNIA'S CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP IN THE WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



# CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

APRIL 1994

COMMISSION REPORT 94-3

# Summary

During the 1993-94 budget session, because of the State's continuing fiscal constraints, the Legislature directed the Commission to assess the merits of California's continued membership in WICHE -- the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, to which 15 western states belong

In this report, the Commission responds to that directive. It provides a brief description of (1) the origin, purpose, and structure of WICHE, (2) the costs of membership, (3) the responsibilities of member states, (4) the services provided by WICHE and the extent to which California benefits from these services, (5) options available to California for deriving similar benefits without full membership in WICHE, (6) conclusions, and (7) recommendations

To draft the report, representatives of the Commission met with members of WICHE's staff, the Commission's Statutory Advisory Committee, and staff of California institutions that receive exchange students from WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program. As a result of those meetings, the Commission believes that California's three Commissioners to WICHE may be able to help that agency redefine how it can be of greater benefit to the State, including accommodating increased student demand for access, better monitoring of student enrollment behavior, and influencing WICHE's policy research agenda to complement that of California

Thus the Commission offers this proposal on page 23

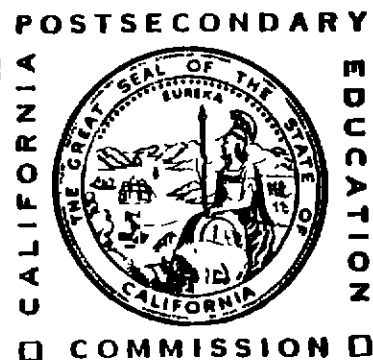
**The Commission recommends that California's three WICHE Commissioners seek to engage WICHE's leaders in a dialogue aimed at redefining how California participates in WICHE. California's three WICHE Commissioners should submit to the Commission for staff evaluation and comment a report on the progress of this dialogue by October 31, 1994, and staff shall complete its analysis for Commission review at its December 1994 meeting. If staff analysis and Commission review concludes that substantial progress has been made in redefining how California participates in WICHE, California should reaffirm its commitment to maintaining full membership in WICHE. In the absence of such progress, California's Legislature should enact appropriate legislation to terminate the State's membership in WICHE.**

The Commission adopted this report on April 18, 1994, on recommendation of its Educational Policy and Programs Committee. Additional copies of the report may be obtained from the Commission at Suite 500, 1303 J Street, Sacramento, California 95814-2938, telephone (916) 445-7933

# A WESTERN COMPACT

*A Report on California's Continued Membership  
in the Western Interstate Commission  
for Higher Education (WICHE)*

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION  
1303 J Street ♦ Suite 500 ♦ Sacramento, California 95814-2938



**COMMISSION REPORT 94-3  
PUBLISHED APRIL 1994**

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# A WESTERN COMPACT

## A Report on California's Continued Membership in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

**L**ANGUAGE in the 1993-94 Budget Act directed the California Postsecondary Education Commission to conduct a study on the value of California's continued membership in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and report back to the Legislature by January 1994. Specifically, it states

Due to the state's budget crisis, and due to the lack of participation by California residents in student exchange programs, there is a need for a comprehensive assessment of the merits of California's continued participation in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). The California Postsecondary Education Commission shall assess the merits of California's continued membership in WICHE. This assessment shall be conducted in consultation with representatives of the Legislative Analyst's office, the Department of Finance, the University of California, the California State University, the California Community Colleges, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, as well as the appropriate student associations of these colleges and universities. The commission shall document both the benefits and the costs to the state and its citizens resulting from this membership. The commission shall submit its report to the appropriate legislative policy and fiscal committees and to the Governor prior to January 1, 1994.

In this report, the Commission responds to that directive of the Legislature. It derived the information in this report from interviews with the WICHE staff, review of dozens of WICHE documents, discussions with the Commission's Statutory Advisory Committee, and telephone or survey data gathered from institutions participating in WICHE-sponsored programs. Contact was also made in person or by telephone with state government officials and others who have been involved in one or more WICHE activities and programs. Every effort was made to obtain information and comment from both those supportive and critical of California's continued involvement in WICHE.

The report is organized in seven sections: (1) a brief description of the origin, purpose, and structure of WICHE, an explanation of the (2) costs and (3) responsibilities of full membership, (4) a description of the services provided by WICHE and an analysis of the benefits derived by California, (5) an analysis of the extent to which California might generate similar benefits without WICHE membership, (6) conclusions, and (7) options and recommendations.

**Origin  
and purpose  
of WICHE**

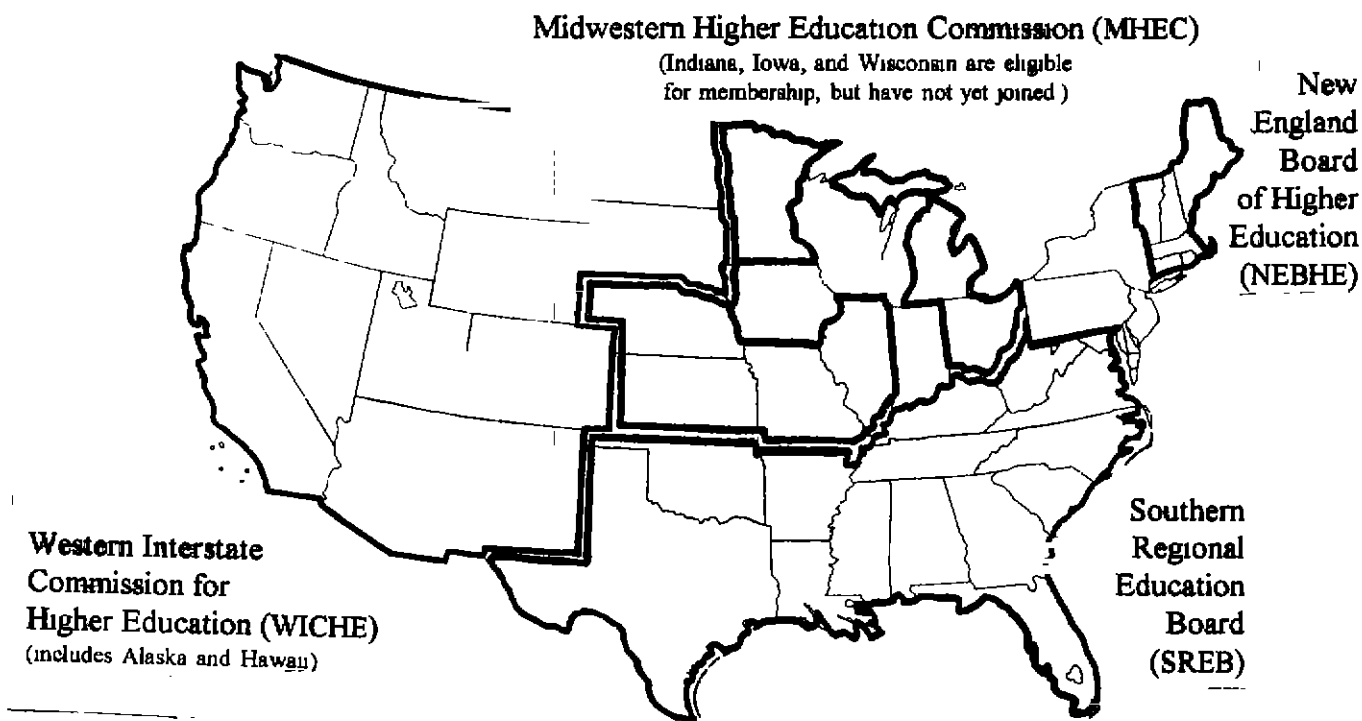
California is one of 15 states that belong to the Western Regional Education Compact. That compact was established in 1953 to coordinate the postsecondary education activities of its members, improve the quality of educational programs, and encourage interstate cooperation in the provision of high cost professional programs in such areas as the health sciences. The compact -- one of four nationally -- is administered by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), a non-profit organization formed under the laws of the state of Colorado.

The original 13 states forming the Western Regional Compact were Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. North Dakota joined the compact as an affiliate member in 1985, and South Dakota became an affiliate in 1988, raising WICHE's total membership to 15 states (Display 1).

The primary purposes of the compact are stated in its Article VIII, which reads as follows:

It shall be the duty of the Commission to enter into such contractual agreements with any institution in the region offering graduate or professional education and with any of the compacting states or territories as may be required in the judg-

*DISPLAY 1 States Belonging to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and the Nation's Three Other Higher Education Interstate Compacts*



Note: New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware are not in areas covered by any interstate compact for higher education.

Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission staff analysis of interstate agency membership.



ment of the Commission to provide adequate services and facilities of graduate and professional education for the citizens of the respective compacting states or territories. The Commission shall first endeavor to provide adequate services and facilities in the fields of dentistry, medicine, public health, and veterinary medicine, and may undertake similar activities in other professional and graduate fields.

In section (b), paragraph two, of Article VIII, the compact goes on to say

It shall be the duty of the Commission to undertake studies of needs for professional and graduate educational facilities in the region, the resources for meeting such needs, and the long-range effects of the Compact on higher education, and from time to time to prepare comprehensive reports on such research for presentation to the Western Governor's Conference and to the legislatures of the compacting states and territories. In conducting such studies, the Commission may confer with any national or regional planning body which may be established. The Commission shall draft and recommend to the Governors of the various compacting states and territories, uniform legislation dealing with problems of higher education in the region.

More explicit statements of the goals and objectives of the compact can be found in Sections 2 through 4 of the WICHE by-laws. The by-laws were adopted in 1952 and subsequently amended in 1961, 1964, 1965, 1971, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1984, 1989, and 1992. Those sections are reproduced in their entirety below.

### *Section 2 Mission*

As envisioned in the Compact, the mission of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education is to help its member states to work together to meet the workforce needs of the states and the education needs of their residents. WICHE encourages cooperation and sharing of resources among states and institutions, and with related private and public enterprises.

- a To improve access to higher education for all people in the member states
- b To improve educational quality in all segments of higher education
- c To further efforts to make higher education more cost-effective and more accountable educationally and financially, to reduce unnecessary duplication, and to strengthen confidence and support for higher education
- d To provide leadership characterized by a broad, long-range view of social, economic, demographic, and political developments that have an impact on higher education

### *Section 3. Objectives*

WICHE seeks to accomplish its mission through a variety of activities that have the following objectives:

- a To extend the availability of quality higher education programs among western states
- b To identify emerging issues, trends and problems affecting higher education

- c To provide research, analysis, and reporting of information on public policy issues of concern in the WICHE states, and to provide opportunities for discussion and strengthened understanding of these issues among policymakers
- d To promote collaboration within higher education and among the educational sectors, the government sector, and the private sector
- e To identify the broad array of technical, programmatic, and financial resources available in higher education in the region, and to link these resources to the needs of the region
- f To serve as an informed and objective representative of higher education before western governmental and education leaders
- g To help increase the participation and success in higher education of under-represented and underserved populations
- h To promote the use of new and effective technologies, models, and methods in higher education
- i To strengthen the linkages between higher education and the economy, including workforce requirements and government services
- j To encourage western higher education cooperation with other regions and, where appropriate, across national boundaries

#### *Section 4. Program Criteria*

The names of the agency implies certain criteria

- a *Western* That the program has significant implications for people and institutions in the western states, but may have implications for other states as well,
- b *Interstate* That the program has significant implications for more than one state, usually a group of states, with interstate and interinstitutional cooperation implied,
- c *Commission* That the program is sponsored or co-sponsored by the Commission and has its approval
- d *Higher Education* That the program has a significant component related to higher education

#### **Costs of membership**

By provision of the compact's by-laws, operating costs for WICHE are apportioned equally among all member states in the form of annual dues. In 1993-94, each state's annual dues were \$75,000 and comprised approximately 34.7 percent of WICHE's total operating funds of \$3,128,181 (not including student exchange fees). Member dues have increased for the 1994-95 fiscal year to \$79,000.

In 1978, the California Legislature designated the California Postsecondary Education Commission as a "pass-through" agency with the responsibility for annually determining and paying membership dues on behalf of the State. This structural relationship between California and WICHE -- with the Commission serving as the fiscal agent for the State -- has contributed to the misperception that it is the Commission, rather than the State, that is a member of WICHE.

This relationship was called into question in 1991-92 when, in response to across-the-board reductions in state agencies, the Commission passed on a proportional share of its base budget reductions to WICHE. This action was necessitated by the fact that the State budget process does not include a separate line-item for WICHE membership dues. Therefore the Commission has been required to absorb all dues assessments as well as increases in annual membership dues from its agency budget -- a requirement that, if left unchecked, threatens the Commission's ability to carry out its statutory responsibilities.

In a series of letters, the Commission explained the fiscal condition of the State and provided advance notice of its intent to pass on budget reductions to WICHE dues payments. WICHE officials expressed sympathy for California's fiscal predicament, but they steadfastly asserted the belief that the Commission had insufficient authority to unilaterally reduce dues payment, and WICHE's executive director subsequently initiated actions to recover all unpaid portions of California's annual dues. (The cost to the State of adjudicating that administrative claim for unpaid dues could not be reliably estimated during the time allowed for completion of this report.)

**Responsibilities  
of membership**

The primary responsibility of California as a full member of the compact, other than to pay its dues, is to participate in the decision-making process of WICHE. Its other responsibilities are directly tied to involvement in the various programs sponsored by WICHE. The governor of each state makes three appointments to the WICHE Board of Commissioners, subject in most cases to confirmation by the state senate. The governor is free to make his appointments from among state government officials, leaders in higher education, or private citizens, providing that at least one member is an "educator engaged in the field of higher education." Each appointed commissioner serves a term of four years or until another commissioner has been appointed.

California's current WICHE Commissioners are Judith Chambers, Vice President for Student Life, University of the Pacific, Stockton; Warren H. Fox, Executive Director, California Postsecondary Education Commission, Sacramento; and Diane Vines, Dean, School of Health, California State University, Dominguez Hills.

**WICHE programs  
and services**

As part of its overall strategy to facilitate greater interstate cooperation between the western states, WICHE administers a variety of programs and services. The longest standing, and perhaps best known, are the student exchange programs described below. In addition, WICHE coordinates a number of special projects, some of which are externally funded, that incorporate multi-state cooperation as a central component of the project. It also publishes periodic research and policy reports on areas of interest in postsecondary education, and it hosts forums for education and political leaders of compact states and territories to discuss and identify collaborative strategies for responding to key challenges for postsecondary education.

### *Student exchange programs*

Four separate student exchange programs, covering a broad range of undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, are administered by WICHE. In Fall 1992, more than 7,100 students from 14 western states participated in these programs, which are designed to encourage and assist sharing of facilities and education programs among the 15 western states and territories. California has never sent students to other states under any of these exchange programs, but it is one of the largest receiving states under the Professional Student Exchange Program.

*The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)* The Professional Student Exchange Program is the oldest of the WICHE exchange programs. Participating students usually pay resident tuition (or approximately one-third of regular tuition in independent institutions) and the sending state pays an additional "support fee" established by WICHE. The program was initiated in 1953 to provide opportunities for residents of the member states to pursue professional training in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine without each state having to invest in establishing and maintaining their own professional school programs in these areas. Over the years, the number of academic fields covered by the program has expanded to sixteen. Displays 2 and 3 below and at the right provide information on student enrollment and support fees generated for each participating state, and on student participation by discipline, over the last two years.

**DISPLAY 2** *Enrollment and Fees Paid by State in WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program, 1992-93 and 1993-94*

State	Enrollment				Fees			
	1992-93		1993-94		1992-93		1993-94	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Alaska	57	5.5%	58	5.7%	\$818,451	6.7%	\$760,233	6.3%
Arizona	129	12.5	131	12.8	1,924,318	15.8	\$1,959,500	16.1
California	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Colorado	29	2.8	30	2.9	205,900	1.7	212,400	1.7
Hawaii	101	9.8	102	10.0	927,630	7.6	897,733	7.4
Idaho	37	3.6	35	3.4	460,312	3.8	449,952	3.7
Montana	102	9.9	95	9.3	1,479,268	12.2	1,496,168	12.3
Nevada	113	11.0	101	9.9	870,163	7.2	851,117	7.0
New Mexico	122	11.8	128	12.5	1,748,901	14.4	1,784,990	14.7
North Dakota	36	3.5	29	2.8	456,500	3.8	344,800	2.8
Oregon	76	7.1	83	8.1	445,465	3.7	487,581	4.0
Utah	61	5.9	63	6.2	873,700	7.2	935,700	7.7
Washington	17	1.6	17	1.7	113,600	0.9	122,400	1.0
Wyoming	<u>153</u>	<u>14.8</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>14.8</u>	<u>1,779,586</u>	<u>14.5</u>	<u>1,857,946</u>	<u>15.3</u>
Totals	1,067	100.0%	1,024	100.0%	\$12,278,026	100.0%	\$12,160,520	100.0%

Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission staff analysis of WICHE documents.

*DISPLAY 3 Percentage of Student Participation by Discipline in WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program, 1992-93 and 1993-94*

<u>Discipline</u>	<u>1992-93</u>	<u>1993-94</u>
Architecture	1 0%	1 0%
Dentistry	11 3	10 9
Forestry	0 0	0 0
Law	4 5	4 0
Graduate Library Studies	1 6	1 3
Maritime Technology	0 0	0 0
Medicine	6 3	6 8
Graduate Nursing Education	0 1	0 0
Occupational Therapy	7 1	5 7
Optometry	17 4	16 2
Osteopathic Medicine	3 3	3 3
Pharmacy	2 5	2 6
Physical Therapy	9 7	12 1
Physician Assistant	0 2	0 5
Podiatry	2 4	2 1
Public Health	0 7	0 9
Veterinary Medicine	<u>32 0</u>	<u>32 6</u>
Total	100 0%	100 0%

Source California Postsecondary Education Commission staff analysis of WICHE documents

Of the more than 1,000 students participating in the Professional Student Exchange Program in Fall 1993, none of them were California state residents. In fact, California has never sponsored any student's participation in the program. This may be attributable to the fact that California has long had one of the most well developed systems of postsecondary education in the nation, with a wide range of undergraduate, graduate and professional programs available throughout the state. Until recently, California also enjoyed a very strong and diverse economic base, providing it with the wherewithal to add new academic programs when needs were identified or expertise developed. Nonetheless, as Display 4 on page 8 shows, 20.1 percent of the 1,024 sponsored students participating in the PSEP in Fall 1993 attended public and independent institutions located in California. These institutions, in turn, received only 15.0 percent (\$1,829,557) of the total fees paid by sending states.

*The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)*

The Western Regional Graduate Program was initiated in 1981 and extends tuition reciprocity to students in all WICHE states, except California, in a variety of specialized graduate programs. The specific graduate programs involved in the Western Regional Graduate Program are nominated by institutions and chosen by a regional committee through a review process. In order for programs

to qualify for participation, they "must be distinctive with respect to total program, sub-specialization or resources, and fill a need not met by more than three other programs in participating states." In Fall 1992, 111 masters and doctoral programs at 37 different institutions were involved in the Western Regional Graduate Program. On average, approximately 300 graduate students are granted nonresident tuition waivers annually by virtue of their participation in this exchange program. As noted earlier, California does not participate in this program.

*The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)*

The Western Undergraduate Exchange program was initiated in Fall 1988. In part, the undergraduate exchange represents a joint effort of the states and institutions to limit costs, respond to expanding student populations, take advantage of unused capacity at some institutions and in some programs, and avoid unnecessary proliferation of duplicate programs. A Western Undergraduate Exchange Council has been established to review and offer policy recommendations to the full WICHE Commission.

The Undergraduate Exchange program offers undergraduates a significant tuition and fee reduction for specified programs in other states -- primarily in baccalaureate-granting institutions but, in some states, two-year colleges as well. Many institutions in states participating in WUE admit students into academic programs on a space available basis only, but that practice is being reexamined. The tuition and fees paid

**DISPLAY 4 Student and Fee Totals for WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program, 1992-93 and 1993-94**

State	Year	Number of Students		Students Received						Total Fees Paid	Total Fees Received			
		Sent	Total		Public		Independent		Public		Independent			
			No	Percent	No	Percent	No	Percent	Amount		Percent	Amount	Percent	
Alaska	Fall 1992	57	0	0 0%	0	0 0%	0	0 0%	\$818,451	0	0 0%	0	0 0%	
	Fall 1993	58	0	0 0	0	0 0	0	0 0	\$760,233	0	0 0	0	0 0	
Arizona	Fall 1992	129	14	1 4	14	2 2	0	0 0	\$1,924,318	\$128,000	1 4	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	131	12	1 2	12	1 9	0	0 0	\$1,959,500	\$103,150	1 1	0	0 0	
Colorado	Fall 1992	29	312	30 3	311	49 1	1	0 3	\$205,900	\$5,162,153	56 6	\$4,200	0 1	
	Fall 1993	30	314	30 7	313	48 5	1	0 3	\$212,400	\$5,337,355	57 3	\$4,300	0 2	
Hawaii	Fall 1992	101	3	0 3	3	0 5	0	0 0	\$927,630	\$30,350	0 3	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	102	2	0 2	2	0 3	0	0 0	\$897,733	\$24,750	0 3	0	0 0	
Idaho	Fall 1992	37	2	0 2	2	0 3	0	0 0	\$460,312	\$7,000	0 1	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	35	2	0 2	2	0 3	0	0 0	\$449,952	\$7,200	0 1	0	0 0	
Montana	Fall 1992	102	6	0 6	6	0 9	0	0 0	\$1,479,268	\$20,933	0 2	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	95	6	0 6	6	0 9	0	0 0	\$1,496,168	14,500	0 2	0	0 0	
Nevada	Fall 1992	113	5	0 5	5	0 8	0	0 0	\$870,163	\$114,000	1 3	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	101	5	0 5	5	0 8	0	0 0	\$851,117	\$114,000	1 2	0	0 0	
New Mexico	Fall 1992	122	6	0 6	6	0 9	0	0 0	\$1,748,901	\$106,800	1 2	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	128	7	0 7	7	1 1	0	0 0	\$1,748,900	\$114,850	1 2	0	0 0	
North Dakota	Fall 1992	36	56	5 4	56	8 8	0	0 0	\$456,500	\$445,596	4 9	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	29	77	7 5	77	11 9	0	0 0	\$344,800	\$544,395	5 8	0	0 0	
Oregon	Fall 1992	74	213	20 7	55	8 7	158	39 7	\$445,465	\$882,600	9 7	\$1,004,464	33 1	
	Fall 1993	83	217	21 2	54	8 4	163	43 0	\$487,581	\$812,000	8 7	\$1,028,255	36 1	
Utah	Fall 1992	61	29	2 8	29	4 6	0	0 0	\$873,700	\$478,243	5 2	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	63	35	3 4	35	5 4	0	0 0	\$935,700	\$592,819	6 4	0	0 0	
Washington	Fall 1992	17	92	8 9	68	10 7	24	6 0	\$113,600	\$791,551	8 7	\$136,268	4 5	
	Fall 1993	17	92	9 0	63	9 8	29	7 7	\$122,400	\$804,367	8 6	\$146,732	5 2	
Wyoming	Fall 1992	153	2	0 2	2	0 3	0	0 0	\$1,830,514	\$8,400	0 1	0	0 0	
	Fall 1993	152	2	0 2	2	0 3	0	0 0	\$1,857,946	\$8,600	0 1	0	0 0	
Out of Region	Fall 1992	0	61	5 9	39	6 2	22	5 5	\$0	\$600,800	6 6	\$252,200	8 3	
	Fall 1993	0	47	4 6	33	5 1	14	3 7	\$0	\$508,390	5 5	\$165,300	5 8	
California	Fall 1992	0	230	22 3	37	5 8	193	48.5	\$0	\$341,500	3 7	\$1,639,664	54 0	
	Fall 1993	0	206	20 1	34	5.3	172	45.4	\$0	\$325,684	3 5	\$1,503,873	52 8	
Total	Fall 1992	1,031	1,031	100 0%	633	61 4%	398	38 6%	\$12,154,722	\$9,117,926	75 0%	\$3,036,796	25 0%	
	Fall 1993	1,024	1,024	100 0%	645	63 0%	379	37 0%	\$12,160,520	\$9,312,060	76 6%	\$2,848,460	23 4%	

1992 Ratio of Student Enrollment in California Public and Independent Institutions	Public 16 1%	Independent 83 9%
1993 Ratio of Student Enrollment in California Public and Independent Institutions	16 5	83 5
1992 Total Program Fees Received by California Institutions	Amount \$1,981,164	Percent of Total 16 3%
1993 Total Program Fees Received by California Institutions	\$1,829,557	15 0%

Source California Postsecondary Education Commission staff analysis from WICHE documents

by WUE students are equal to 150 percent of the total in-state tuition and fees -- representing a major cost savings when compared to full nonresident tuition and fees at these institutions. In 1993, a total of 6,421 students participated in WUE programs.

Besides California, two other member states -- Arizona and Washington -- did not participate in this program in 1993.

*WICHE Scholars* The last of the student exchange programs -- the WICHE Scholars program -- provides an opportunity for students who reside in WICHE states to attend programs in other WICHE states that are (1) not available in public institutions located in their state of residence and (2) that are not available through other WICHE student exchange programs. Students who participate in this program pay resident tuition and fees -- or one-third of tuition and fees at independent institutions -- while their home state makes up the difference. In 1993-94, one California institution -- the University of California, Berkeley -- accepted WICHE scholars from other states, although California sent no students to other states.

### *Special projects*

WICHE is involved in a number of special projects selected because of perceived significance to member states. In some cases, these projects rely on existing resources available to WICHE or on assessments from participating member states. In other cases, WICHE has pursued -- and in some instances, received -- funding from external sources. Summarized below are examples of the special projects in which WICHE has been involved over the past several years.

*Higher education and the economy of the west* Since 1990, WICHE has been working to define for the policy community the enduring ways in which higher education contributes to the economy and how institutions need to respond to changing social and economic conditions. To this end, the WICHE Commission approved a series of recommendations focused on the changes that higher education must make if it is to be responsive to changed conditions. It presented these recommendations in a published report that was supported by a series of background papers and highlighted in November 1993 through a nationally broadcast teleconference.

*Diversity of students, staff, and faculty* WICHE has been concerned about the underrepresentation of students, staff, and faculty from racial/ethnic groups historically underrepresented in postsecondary education. To increase awareness and diversity of college and university campuses, WICHE has done the following:

- ♦ Sponsored at least five state-specific or regional conferences concerned with institutional diversity,
- ♦ Examined this issue in more than six reports, videotapes, and other resource materials,

- ♦ Piloted the Institute on Ethnic Diversity in 1990 in Colorado to help colleges and universities increase their effectiveness in the recruitment, retention and graduation of students from historically underrepresented groups, and to bring together teams of senior campus administrators, faculty members, and students in a strategic planning process to enhance educational equity,
- ♦ Helped expand that pilot effort to cover 20 institutions located in the states of New Mexico, North Dakota, Idaho, and Oregon,
- ♦ Proposed in 1992 and subsequently obtained funding from the Pew Charitable Trust and others to implement a "Regional Minority Doctoral Scholars" program to increase the number of students from racial/ethnic groups historically underrepresented in postsecondary education who pursue college or university teaching careers upon graduation. For this regional scholars program, foundation money will be used to match state and institutional funds to support graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds. Students will receive a stipend of \$12,000 per year for three years and a waiver of tuition and fees. Participating departments will receive a grant to offset their costs of program participation.

As part of this effort, and with funding support from participating states, WICHE plans to encourage students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups to progress from undergraduate to graduate school. Grant money will be available to institutions and departments to facilitate this effort. Similarly, dissertation fellowships will be made available to a select number of students from underrepresented groups to encourage them to complete their dissertations and pursue teaching positions at one of the colleges and universities in WICHE states.

*The Northwest Academic Forum* Formed in the 1980s, the Northwest Academic Forum promotes the sharing of graduate research and information among the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington. As a result of forum efforts, NorthWestNet -- a research and educational computer network connecting universities, government laboratories, and private corporations in six northwest states -- was established in 1986 with the assistance of a \$1.8 million grant from the National Science Foundation. NorthWestNet allows members to communicate via electronically transmitted text, share computing resources, collaborate in research projects, and have access to the nation's largest and most advanced academic research computing facilities.

*Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications* WICHE established the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications in 1989 to strengthen the efficiency, impact, and quality of educational telecommunications systems and programs. The cooperative has sought to attain this end by making information, resources and expertise in the telecommunications field more readily available to its 150 member institutions that pay annual dues and are actively involved in planning and implementing a variety of multi-state projects. Through a new grant from the federal Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), the Western cooperative is working to establish uniform requirements for telecom-



municated degree programs, enabling both public and independent colleges and universities to deliver interstate programs more easily when ready

*Mental Health Program:* The WICHE Mental Health Program focuses on mental health, human resource development, and the improvement and utilization of state mental health data systems. The program provides a mental-health information clearinghouse and technical assistance center for the region, conducts workshops and conferences, coordinates multi-state studies and demonstration projects, and publishes and disseminates policy analysis and reports on mental health issues of common concern to the western states

*U.S. - Mexico Educational Interchange Project* Within the past year, WICHE has developed an educational cooperation and exchange project that includes the six northern border states of Mexico, the state of Texas, WICHE states, and the Mexican federal government. After an initial planning phase, the project will be expanded to include four western Canadian provinces. The project has five components: (1) comparative research analyzing higher education systems in the U.S. and Mexico, (2) a clearinghouse of bi-national educational exchanges, (3) improved educational telecommunications linkages between the two countries, (4) leadership development for educators, and (5) bi-national teacher training and faculty development

#### *Research and policy studies*

WICHE staff members are frequently involved in various research efforts directed towards academic or policy areas of perceived interest and importance to higher education. The results of these research and policy studies are generally made available to member states in published form, although they have recently begun offering some of their reports and accompanying data in diskette form. Copies of final publications are routinely made available to the broader public and specific institutions at a modest price. Institutions located in WICHE states receive a discount for all WICHE publications made available at a price, some publications are offered free of charge.

Since 1987, WICHE has issued nearly 30 publications covering various topics in the areas of demography and diversity, higher education reforms, educational telecommunications, faculty supply and demand, tuition and fees, international education, and student opportunities (primarily brochures that detail eligibility, certification, admission procedures and other relevant information on WICHE student exchange programs). WICHE also produced a series of occasional papers -- usually between eight and ten pages in length -- presenting issues of importance in higher education. Two videotapes -- one a short presentation making a case for continued support for information and education networks, and one 45-minute feature on the dramatic demographic changes occurring in the west -- are also available.

In addition to conducting and publishing the results of its research efforts, WICHE

staff also sponsor periodic workshops, seminars and conferences to work with educators and legislators on educational issues and policy development. In recent years, these seminars have delved into such topics as diversity, community college issues, student fees, and educational reforms.

### *Summary*

In summary, WICHE is a multifaceted organization engaged in a variety of activities designed to serve multiple purposes. It administers a series of student exchange programs and several special projects as well as engages in research and policy analysis for the explicit purpose of facilitating the sharing of educational resources and programs among member states. California, although historically very supportive of WICHE and the purposes it serves, has not been an active participant in many of WICHE's programs and services. California has had a well developed system of postsecondary education for some time and, as such, has not had as much to gain from active involvement in WICHE as have many of the smaller member states. Thus, the question has arisen regarding the extent to which California might be able to derive benefits comparable to those available from WICHE through means other than full membership.

### **Alternative paths to comparable WICHE benefits**

California places a high value on cooperation with others throughout the United States and, increasingly, the world. It has long recognized that knowledge of what others are doing may contribute to efficient and effective use of state resources to address similar problems and challenges. Accordingly, California maintains membership in a variety of interstate compacts, regional and national organizations, including higher education associations and other groups involved professionally in postsecondary education issues.

Membership in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education offers a variety of benefits to member states, including expanding the academic opportunities they are able to extend to state residents, maximizing use of limited resources available to higher education, and providing access to research findings on some of the most current issues confronting higher education in the west. As mentioned, however, these benefits are experienced very differently by the member states, in part because of the resources that have been traditionally available to higher education in each state and in part because of the size of each state. Indeed, as Display 5 on the opposite page illustrates, the size of California's postsecondary enterprise as measured by total fall enrollment is slightly greater than the combined total of all the other WICHE states. Given WICHE's high school graduate projections and California's high college-going rates, this proportional disparity is not likely to change.

For purposes of analysis, the primary benefits of membership in WICHE can be organized under the following categories: (1) interstate cooperation among western states, (2) student exchange programs, (3) involvement in special projects emphasizing the particular needs of western states, and (4) information and resource sharing. Each is reviewed in turn below, and followed by possible alternative ways

**DISPLAY 5** *Total Fall Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Education in WICHE Member States, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, and 1991, and Projected Number of High School Graduates, 1999-2000 and 2008-09*

<u>State</u>	Total Fall Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Education					Projections of Public and Independent High School Graduates		
	<u>Fall 1970</u>	<u>Fall 1975</u>	<u>Fall 1980</u>	<u>Fall 1985</u>	<u>Fall 1990</u>	<u>Fall 1991</u>	<u>1999-00</u>	<u>2008-09</u>
Alaska	9,471	13,998	21,296	27,479	29,833	30,793	7,818	7,275
Arizona	109,619	173,542	202,716	216,854	264,148	272,971	46,872	58,537
Colorado	123,395	149,814	162,916	161,314	227,126	235,108	43,375	43,957
Hawaii	36,562	46,671	47,181	49,937	56,436	57,302	13,890	14,634
Idaho	34,567	39,075	43,018	42,668	51,881	55,397	18,405	15,842
Montana	30,062	30,843	35,177	35,958	35,876	37,821	12,836	11,829
Nevada	13,669	30,187	40,455	43,656	61,728	62,664	16,238	27,184
New Mexico	44,461	51,944	58,283	68,295	85,500	93,507	20,091	20,773
North Dakota	31,495	29,743	34,069	37,939	37,878	38,739	9,115	6,614
Oregon	122,177	145,281	157,458	137,967	165,741	167,107	35,359	39,317
South Dakota	30,639	30,260	32,761	32,772	34,208	36,332	10,831	9,432
Utah	81,687	87,323	93,987	103,994	121,303	130,419	33,528	28,790
Washington	183,544	227,168	303,603	231,553	263,384	274,760	67,183	75,348
Wyoming	<u>15,220</u>	<u>18,078</u>	<u>21,147</u>	<u>24,204</u>	<u>31,326</u>	<u>32,118</u>	<u>6,768</u>	<u>4,648</u>
Total	866,568	1,073,927	1,254,067	1,214,590	1,466,368	1,525,038	342,309	364,180
Percent of U S	10 1%	9 6%	10 4%	9 9%	10 6%	10 6%	11 8%	11 2%
California	1,257,245	1,787,932	1,790,993	1,650,439	1,808,789	2,024,274	346,721	485,151
Percent of U S	14 7%	16 0%	14 8%	13 5%	13 1%	14 1%	12 0%	14 9 %
U S Total	8,580,887	11,184,859	12,096,895	12,247,055	13,819,522	14,358,953	2,900,700	3,264,572

Sources National Center for Education Statistics, 1993, and WICHE, 1993

to derive comparable benefits, assuming that California was not a full member of WICHE

*Interstate cooperation between western states*

One of the useful benefits of membership in WICHE for member states is the fact that it has an explicit focus on the western United States. The values and priorities of other geographic regions of the nation are frequently very different than those in the west and the problems and challenges they face are often quite different as well. To be sure, there are commonalities throughout the nation, particularly in the area of fiscal resources available to support postsecondary education institutions. But the focus on the west is one of the key advantages of WICHE membership and brings with it opportunities for cooperation and resource sharing not readily available in national organizations.

WICHE is the only higher education interstate compact or regional association that specifically focuses on postsecondary education issues of the western states.

California does, however, maintain state membership in several national higher education organizations with purposes similar to that of WICHE. The more prominent of these organizations include the American Council on Education (ACE), the Education Commission of the States (ECS) and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). The American Council on Education also encourages institutional memberships, while ECS and SHEEO both rely on state membership only. Like WICHE, ECS is a nonprofit, interstate compact, but with membership from 49 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. SHEEO's membership is comprised of representatives from each state's coordinating agency for higher education -- the California Postsecondary Education Commission in this state.

Each of the organizations mentioned seeks to foster greater cooperation and information sharing among the various states in the nation. ECS and SHEEO have been particularly responsive to requests to coordinate information gathering and dissemination among regional collections of states, including western states. The fact that both organizations maintain headquarters in Denver may contribute to their receptivity to issues of key concern to postsecondary education in the western states. They represent feasible alternatives to WICHE membership as a means to gain access to collaboration and information sharing among western states.

It should also be noted that, while interaction and cooperation with western states is valuable, there is perhaps more to be learned from states that are more similar in size and composition to California. For instance, California has more in common with such states as Florida, New York, and Texas than it does with states like Montana or Wyoming. Each of those states are large industrial states and has a comparable economic climate in terms of mix of industries and business sectors, sizeable population growth, rapidly growing diversity in state population, and extensive systems of public and independent postsecondary education institutions. As such, the type of problems and challenges they face are similar to those faced by California, and the actions they take to address those problems could be particularly instructive for this state.

### *Student exchange programs*

One of the major benefits resulting from membership in WICHE is the opportunity to participate in one or more of the student exchange programs administered by WICHE as a cost-effective and efficient way of providing postsecondary educational opportunities to state residents in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs not otherwise available within the state. Through these programs described earlier in this report, students from member states can enroll in specialized academic programs in other WICHE states at prices less than that charged to out-of-state residents, with the sending state making up the difference. The costs incurred by states can be significant, depending on the number of students participating in the various programs, but still represent a substantial savings from costs associated with establishing the individual programs and professional schools needed to meet the educational aspirations of state residents and the workforce needs of the state.

California has been involved in only one of the WICHE student exchange programs, the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), and then only as a receiving state. California has never sent a student to any other state as part of the WICHE exchange programs. This is largely a result of the size of California's postsecondary education system and the scope and quality of its academic program offerings. Consequently, there are few academic or professional programs offered in the compact states that are not already available somewhere within California's system of public and independent colleges and universities. There are, however, direct fiscal benefits derived by California universities from accepting exchange students from other states.

During the 1993-94 academic year, California public universities accepted 34 exchange students and independent universities accepted an additional 172 exchange students from WICHE states in their professional programs, as Display 4 on page 8 above shows. They represented 20.1 percent of all students participating in the Professional Student Exchange Program that year. Tuition and fees paid by these students and their sending states amounted to \$325,684 at the five public universities receiving exchange students and \$1,503,873 at 15 private and independent institutions receiving students. This is a substantial benefit when contrasted with the \$75,000 annual membership dues assessed for 1993-94. However, conversations with representatives from some of the top receiving schools indicate they believe the slots occupied by these exchange students would be filled by other students -- both resident and nonresident -- as the programs they are enrolled in are among those with the highest demand for access.

#### *Involvement in special projects*

Through research and policy analysis, WICHE has sought to provide state and institutional leaders with information concerning issues of vital importance to postsecondary education and has helped develop policy options and programs to address those concerns. Research and policy analysis has been conveyed to policy makers through publications, conferences, and other means. Key examples of this activity include (1) providing policy recommendations and strategies to improve the recruitment, retention and educational progress of students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, (2) providing projections of future college-age populations and the supply/demand for college faculty, (3) assessing the needs for trained personnel in specific health fields, and (4) exploring the role of higher education in state and regional economic development efforts.

California, along with other states, has been a beneficiary of WICHE's work in these areas. While much of the information and some of the recommendations have been insightful, they have been largely anticlimactic for California. This is so because of the tremendous influence California has on trends in higher education in the west. California's size exceeds that of all the other WICHE states combined, both in terms of total state population and college enrollment. The issues of handling tremendous growth in higher education, student, staff and faculty diversity, the need for faculty replacement, and adjusting student fees in the face of reduced

state support for postsecondary education are all issues that were first recognized in California. They necessarily came to the attention of WICHE because of the tremendous influence California data have on higher education trends in the western states.

Many of the research and policy reports issued by WICHE parallel similar reports produced by the California Postsecondary Education Commission as it carried out its statutory responsibility for coordinating postsecondary education in the state. In some cases, the Commission's reports preceded those of WICHE by one or more years. Nonetheless, WICHE publications have addressed topics in other western states on which the California Postsecondary Education Commission has not yet completed work or had the resources to conduct a thorough analysis, such as faculty workload and prospects for increased productivity. Alternatives to WICHE do exist, however, through the publications of other organizations such as the American Council on Education, the Education Commission of the States, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), the National Center for Postsecondary Governance and Finance, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) and a host of other research organizations and policy centers. In addition, WICHE publications are available for purchase to the public.

#### *Information and resource sharing*

A promising new program about to be initiated by WICHE -- the Regional Minority Doctoral Scholars program -- may well provide a successful model for recruiting and developing teaching faculty among students from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds. The program will combine resources at the state level with grant funding to provide fellowships and dissertation year support for underrepresented students interested in pursuing a teaching career at a college or university within one of the compact states. Successful models operating in other states offer hope that this doctoral scholars program will be successful in the western states. Success in this area has broad support within California's Legislature and postsecondary education community.

Like other states, California has a keen desire to find effective ways to diversify the students, staff and faculty to reflect the diversity of the state. Each of California's public college and university systems have programs and policies in place designed to promote greater student, staff and faculty diversity. The California State University system, for instance, has operated a Forgivable Loan/Doctoral Program for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities since 1987-88. The purpose of this program is to increase representation on the State University's faculty of individuals from racial/ethnic backgrounds historically underrepresented in the profession, women, and people with disabilities. The program provides a low-interest loan to those individuals to complete a doctoral program in fields in which they are underrepresented and become professors on one of the State University campuses. The incentive for students to seek a teaching position within the State University is that their loans are forgiven on the basis of 20 percent for each year of full-time teaching in the State University subsequent to completing the doctorate. The State

University invested \$1 million in 1988-89 and that amount has grown to \$3 million annually in support of students in this program

The University of California also sponsors and participates in a variety of programs designed to increase the number of students from racial/ethnic groups historically underrepresented among higher education faculty. Among the University's sponsored activities are these:

- ♦ The Undergraduate Minority Scholars Program, which was initiated in 1989 and is intended to help students develop collaborative study skills and group learning techniques within small-group, faculty directed sessions,
- ♦ The Pregraduate Mentorship Program, which was also formed in 1989 to increase the representation of students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and women in UC academic graduate programs,
- ♦ The Graduate Outreach and Recruitment Program, which is designed to increase the pool of qualified students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups applying to UC graduate programs by providing opportunities to work closely with graduate students and faculty in summer research internships,
- ♦ The President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, which was initiated in 1985-86 and provides fellowship assistance to students in furthering their research and training through faculty mentorship,
- ♦ Pre-Tenure Awards, which provide release time and research assistance to aid outstanding women and assistant professors from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups to obtain tenure,
- ♦ The Faculty Development Affirmative Action Program, which assists women and junior faculty from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups improve their research skills, and
- ♦ The Targets of Opportunity for Diversity Program (TOP), which was started in 1983 to enable campuses to capitalize on opportunities to hire women and faculty from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups by waiving requirements for disciplinary specialization and search procedures

In addition to these activities, the University of California participates in a number of intersegmental programs that seek to provide support and encouragement for students from underrepresented groups to complete doctoral studies and acquire tenure. These programs include (1) the CSU-UC California Predoctoral Program, (2) the California Minority Graduate Education Forum, (3) the CSU-UC Doctoral Recruitment Network, (4) the Eugene Cota-Robles Fellowship Program, (5) the Graduate Research Assistantship/Mentorship Program, and (6) the Dissertation-Year Fellowship Program.

WICHE is also playing a leadership role in facilitating greater information sharing through electronic transmission of text and other educational data available through electronic networks. NorthWestNet is an example of this activity, where participating states share the most recent research and educational information available.

regionally and nationally. Electronic exchange is becoming a more accepted mode of communication for purposes of sharing information among educators and policy makers. The growing popularity of Internet is likely to reinforce these activities. The additional contribution from WICHE staff is the focus on the use of technology in educational delivery, most commonly through distance learning strategies.

California has been among the leaders in developing and extending the use of technology for performing a variety of tasks, including information sharing. Individual campuses, in fact, are among the leaders in the use of educational technology to complement the teaching-learning process. Progress in this area, however, has been slower than many would desire, at least in terms of using technology as a deliberate strategy to improve productivity and efficiency in providing instruction to more students with the same or fewer resources. Higher education leadership have been understandably wary of embracing educational technology too uncritically, given the initial investment necessary to take full advantage of technology and the poor health of the State's economy. This represents an area, then, in which California could benefit from centralized coordination and from the lessons learned from other states that have moved more readily than California to the strategic use of technology as a designed portion of their educational delivery system.

**Conclusions  
about California's  
membership  
and participation  
in WICHE**

The question of whether California should be a member of WICHE would be much simpler if California were initially being solicited to join the interstate compact. In that case, the critical question would be whether the potential benefits of membership would be sufficient to warrant legislative action and an annual investment each year of at least \$79,000 -- the current year's dues assessment. It is likely that California would favor membership, since joining the compact would strengthen the State's ongoing collaboration with neighboring states, and California's participation in WICHE's student exchange programs might reduce the demand for it to build expensive new facilities and open new programs. However, California's current postsecondary policy concerns and its persistent economic recession would likely delay any legislative approval of membership for several years.

The actual question before California -- as one of the original 13 states that comprised the compact in 1954 -- is far more complex. Much has changed since 1954, both in postsecondary education generally and in the State. California has built one of the most comprehensive systems of postsecondary education available anywhere in the world and, for nearly 34 years, has been able to provide access to postsecondary education to virtually any Californian who desired to continue or pursue education beyond high school. This access has been afforded to students notwithstanding their academic areas of interest.

At the same time, California has led the nation in a demographic reconstitution of its citizenry and its college and university enrollment. As a consequence, both the Demographic Research Unit of the Department of Finance and the California Postsecondary Education Commission -- as the State's postsecondary education coor-



minating body -- have conducted numerous comparative analyses to assess the potential impact of the State's rapidly changing demography, and these analyses have often preceded those done by WICHE staff

Moreover, California is now faced with one of the most daunting economic challenges in its history how to best allocate General Fund revenue insufficient to meet an increasing demand for public goods and services With particular reference to postsecondary education, California is having to seriously consider options for rationing access for the first time, due to current demand exceeding State support and projected demand in the near future likely to exceed actual physical capacity It is against this backdrop that California's Legislature is asked to consider whether the State's current benefits of WICHE membership are sufficient to warrant continued membership

Based on California's historical patterns of participation in WICHE programs and services, the Commission concludes that insufficient justification exists to continue the State's membership in WICHE as it now stands After California's nearly 40 years as a member of the compact, neither California's policy makers nor the leadership of WICHE has generated adequate incentives for the State's students to participate in any of the compact's exchange programs -- programs that have the potential to accommodate some of California's increased student demand at a modest cost to students and a lower cost to the State than constructing new academic facilities or programs Moreover, as discussed on pages 11 through 17 of this report, California participates in a number of other multi-state organizations that facilitate cooperative efforts and its own policy analyses often predate that of the compact

Terminating membership in the compact, however, would have several disadvantages

- ♦ First, it would not result in monetary savings to the State for at least two years following official legislative action, pursuant to provisions of the compact
- ♦ Second, termination of membership may well prohibit California from receiving financial support from WICHE for the Regional Minority Doctoral Scholars program -- a new program designed to increase the number of students from historically underrepresented backgrounds who pursue and complete doctoral-level studies
- ♦ Third, California's institutions now accepting students through the Professional Student Exchange Program could be forced to charge those students full non-resident tuition or individually contract with sending states -- an imposing, though not impossible, task
- ♦ Fourth and finally, the information sharing and collaboration available through the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications would be diluted and would require augmented efforts by individual institutions to retain the current benefits of interstate cooperation

As a consequence, the Commission has analyzed the possibility of restructuring

California's involvement in WICHE The current demographic, political, and economic condition of the State has prompted legislators as well as the Commission to assert that California postsecondary education cannot continue to do business as usual New ways to contain costs, share the burden of financing postsecondary education, and effectively deliver quality education to larger numbers of students at the same or lower costs per student must be found Increased cooperation and collaboration and shared use of facilities are among the many suggestions being advanced If the call for a new paradigm for providing postsecondary education opportunities is to be viewed as more than the latest political rhetoric, there is no reason why WICHE should not be incorporated as part of any State strategy As a result, the Commission herewith summarizes several potential areas for restructuring California's participation in WICHE and its programs and services to benefit State goals and priorities for postsecondary education

### *Student access*

One of the most difficult problems facing California today is how to accommodate larger numbers of students seeking education beyond high school As mentioned previously, California has never participated as a sending state in any of WICHE's student exchange programs If California is to retain its commitment to finding a place somewhere for every State resident who desires a postsecondary education, it increasingly will have to look to other than its public institutions Independent institutions in California and other states -- if not the world -- will increasingly need to be viewed as means by which California honors its commitment to access State investment to offset the non-resident tuition costs for Californians attending college in other WICHE states would be less than either the investment required to build additional capacity within the State or annual full-time-equivalent-student appropriations for students at the State's public universities

Alternatively, California could seek to concentrate its higher education investment in access at the undergraduate level while using WICHE's graduate and professional student exchange programs to accommodate more of the demand for education at those levels The numbers of students accommodated in this manner can be calibrated to correspond to the number of students received from other WICHE states Such an arrangement may well result in a net reduction in State support for graduate and professional education while maintaining overall graduate and professional school enrollment and infusing greater geographical student diversity into California's institutions

### *Information management*

The fee increases in California's public colleges and universities over the past four years that resulted from the State's economic recession have influenced decisions by students and their families in ways that are not completely understood What is known is that the proportion of recent high school graduates who go on to attend colleges and universities in California has declined to less than 50 percent -- the lowest college-going rate in more than 15 years The Commission is currently

trying to devise methods for obtaining reliable statistics on the actual number of Californians who are electing to attend postsecondary education institutions in states other than California

It is possible that WICHE and the Postsecondary Education Commission -- California's primary source of information on postsecondary enrollment -- can develop a data collection system in cooperation with other WICHE states that provides consistent and reliable data over time on the numbers of students from member states enrolling in colleges and universities in other member states. Moreover, given WICHE's relationship with the nation's other three higher education interstate compacts, it may be possible over time to develop a data-collection and sharing system that will permit the monitoring of student enrollment in any public college or university throughout the nation. Such cooperation would improve the quality and comprehensiveness of data available to decision makers at substantially reduced costs to each individual state

#### *More sharply focused research*

California has the opportunity to take a more active role in defining the research agenda of WICHE in ways that complement -- rather than replicate -- the policy research agenda within the State. The California Postsecondary Education Commission, by statutory directive and legislative or gubernatorial request, annually undertakes a substantial research agenda. Its work is supplemented by that of the Legislative Analyst's Office, the Senate and Assembly Offices of Research, and a variety of other public and private agencies concerned with postsecondary education policy issues. However, fiscal and political realities often restrict the comprehensiveness of coverage contained within final products.

WICHE's research agenda could be crafted to address those areas not fully considered by any of the existing agencies conducting policy research on postsecondary education. Examples of areas in which WICHE could make a substantial contribution include (1) refining the methodology for calculating the differential cost of providing instruction at the upper division, graduate and professional levels, (2) developing methodology for estimating work force needs of a state, and (3) conducting validation studies on the relationship between selective admission requirements and subsequent student achievement in college. Although not intended to be exhaustive, these examples illustrate ways in which California might help shape WICHE's research agenda to complement its own.

The Commission admits that the history of the past 40 years offers insufficient evidence to reinforce high hopes for a newly structured relationship between California and WICHE. This is not particularly surprising, given California's tendency to operate in a semi-insular fashion. Until recently, it has had little reason to seek fiscal relief through participation in WICHE's student exchange programs and has requested little of WICHE's other programs and services. Similarly, WICHE staff has had greater motivation to pursue a research agenda that carried with it a potential for external funding support than to tailor its agenda in any particular fash-

ion to complement the work of member states. In recent years, however, the national recession has served to question this benign relationship between individual states and WICHE.

In numerous ways, the California Legislature has clearly expressed its intent that the State's postsecondary education community develop and implement collaborative strategies to provide access to high-quality education for all who prepare themselves to benefit from such education. These strategies transcend traditional segmental boundaries and incorporate the resources of independent colleges and universities more explicitly than in the past. The prevailing belief is that such collaborative approaches represent the best path to providing education and educational opportunities in the future and that they will stimulate more effective and efficient use of precious public dollars. WICHE was founded with similar intent, as reflected in its goals as quoted above on page 3. Thus a strong argument can be made that California should actively seek to restructure its relationship with WICHE so as to incorporate WICHE resources in advancing State goals and priorities for postsecondary education.

WICHE, too, has compelling reasons to want to improve the level and quality of California's involvement in its programs and services. California represents the largest state in the west, and its continued membership is essential to any professional organization purporting to represent the western states. The issues that California confronts -- tax rebellion and reform, huge population growth, demographic change, reduced public support for higher education, and student fee increases, to name just a few -- often are precursors to issues that other WICHE member states have to address one or more years later. Further, a decision by California to terminate its membership might prove to be the first thread in the unraveling of the compact -- an eventuality that WICHE's leaders are highly motivated to forestall.

In sum, the environment appears to be fertile for officials of WICHE and California to engage in a candid and focused discussion on ways by which each entity can better benefit from the existence and involvement of the other. Historical trends of participation stand as a stark reminder to both parties of the importance of assuring that such discussions are successful.

#### **Options and recommendations**

Four options are available to California regarding WICHE:

1 *Maintain its current status of membership* This option assumes continuation of California's full membership in WICHE and no substantial change in the level or type of the State's involvement in WICHE programs and services.

2 *Seek affiliate status* This option assumes no substantial change in the level or type of involvement California has in WICHE programs and services, but it seeks a lesser category of membership while stopping short of terminating California's membership.

**3 *Seek to restructure California's relationship with and involvement in WICHE*** This option assumes that California actively collaborates with WICHE leadership to redefine how WICHE can be of greater benefit to the State in accommodating student demand for access, better monitoring of student enrollment behavior, and influencing WICHE's policy research agenda to complement California's

**4 *Terminate California's membership in WICHE*** This option assumes that California's legislative and higher education leaders determine that either they are unwilling to redefine relationships with WICHE at this time or that WICHE is unable or unwilling to adapt to the needs of California. It further assumes that the State's annual investment in WICHE membership dues does not produce unique benefits that cannot be satisfactorily obtained through other venues or that revenues are simply not available for that purpose.

The Commission's analysis leads it to conclude that Option 1 not be given further consideration. While Option 2 would provide some relief from annual membership dues (affiliate status carries a lesser annual membership-dues requirement than full membership), it would do little to improve California's involvement or its benefits from membership, and it raises questions about the permissiveness of compact provisions to allow a full member to become an affiliate member. Thus the Commission concludes that the most viable options for the long term are Options 3 and 4, although it is conceivable that should California's Legislature decide to terminate the State's membership in WICHE, it could seek affiliate status during the intervening two years.

**The Commission recommends that California's three WICHE Commissioners seek to engage WICHE's leaders in a dialogue aimed at redefining how California participates in WICHE. California's three WICHE Commissioners should submit to the Commission for staff evaluation and comment a report on the progress of this dialogue by October 31, 1994, and staff shall complete its analysis for Commission review at its December 1994 meeting. If staff analysis and Commission review concludes that substantial progress has been made in redefining how California participates in WICHE, California should reaffirm its commitment to maintaining full membership in WICHE. In the absence of such progress, California's Legislature should enact appropriate legislation to terminate the State's membership in WICHE.**

**References** National Center for Education Statistics *Digest of Education Statistics, 1993* Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of Education, 1993

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education *High School Graduates Projections by State, 1992-2009* Boulder, Colo. The Commission, October 1993

# CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

THE California Postsecondary Education Commission is a citizen board established in 1974 by the Legislature and Governor to coordinate the efforts of California's colleges and universities and to provide independent, non-partisan policy analysis and recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

## Members of the Commission

The Commission consists of 17 members. Nine represent the general public, with three each appointed for six-year terms by the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly. Six others represent the major segments of postsecondary education in California. Two student members are appointed by the Governor.

As of April 1995, the Commissioners representing the general public are

Henry Der, San Francisco, *Chair*  
Guillermo Rodriguez, Jr., San Francisco, *Vice Chair*  
Elaine Alquist, Santa Clara  
Mim Andelson, Los Angeles  
C. Thomas Dean, Long Beach  
Jeffrey I. Marston, San Diego  
Melinda G. Wilson, Torrance  
Linda J. Wong, Los Angeles  
Ellen F. Wright, Saratoga

Representatives of the segments are

Roy T. Brophy, Fair Oaks, appointed by the Regents of the University of California,  
Yvonne W. Larsen, San Diego, appointed by the California State Board of Education,  
Alice Petrossian, Glendale, appointed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges,  
Ted J. Saenger, San Francisco, appointed by the Trustees of the California State University,  
Kuhl Smeby, Pasadena, appointed by the Governor to represent California's independent colleges and universities, and  
Frank R. Martinez, San Luis Obispo, appointed by the Council for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education

The two student representatives are  
Stephen Leshner, Meadow Vista  
Beverly A. Sandeen, Costa Mesa

## Functions of the Commission

The Commission is charged by the Legislature and Governor to "assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary education resources, thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and to promote diversity, innovation, and responsiveness to student and societal needs."

To this end, the Commission conducts independent reviews of matters affecting the 2,600 institutions of postsecondary education in California, including community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and professional and occupational schools.

As an advisory body to the Legislature and Governor, the Commission does not govern or administer any institutions, nor does it approve, authorize, or accredit any of them. Instead, it performs its specific duties of planning, evaluation, and coordination by cooperating with other State agencies and non-governmental groups that perform those other governing, administrative, and assessment functions.

## Operation of the Commission

The Commission holds regular meetings throughout the year at which it debates and takes action on staff studies and takes positions on proposed legislation affecting education beyond the high school in California. By law, its meetings are open to the public. Requests to speak at a meeting may be made by writing the Commission in advance or by submitting a request before the start of the meeting.

The Commission's day-to-day work is carried out by its staff in Sacramento, under the guidance of its executive director, Warren Halsey Fox, Ph.D., who is appointed by the Commission.

Further information about the Commission and its publications may be obtained from the Commission offices at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938, telephone (916) 445-7933.

# A WESTERN COMPACT: A Report on California's Continued Membership in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Commission Report 94-3



ONE of a series of reports published by the California Postsecondary Education Commission as part of its planning and coordinating responsibilities. Single copies may be obtained without charge from the Commission at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938. Recent reports include

- 93-18 *Appropriations in the 1993-94 State Budget for Higher Education: A Staff Report to the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (September 1993)
- 93-19 *Commission Activities and Concerns of the Past Decade: A Retrospective of Issues Confronting California Higher Education Between 1983 and 1993* (September 1993)
- 93-20 *Library and Information Services Education in California: A Report to the Intersegmental Program Review Council from the Staff of the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (October 1993)
- 93-21 *Who Will Take Responsibility for the Future of California Higher Education? A Statement by Clark Kerr to the California Postsecondary Education Commission, October 25, 1993* (October 1993)
- 93-22 *Creating a Campus for the Twenty-First Century ♦ The California State University and Fort Ord* (October 1993)
- 93-23 *Restabilizing Higher Education: Moderating the Impact on California's College Students and the State's Future from Cutting State Support for Higher Education by \$1.4 Billion Over the Past Three Years: Report of the Executive Director of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, December 1993* (December 1993)
- 93-24 *The State of the State's Educational Enterprise: An Overview of California's Diverse Student Population* (December 1993)
- 94-1 *Legislative and State Budget Priorities of the Commission, 1994: A Report of the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (January 1994)
- 94-2 *Good Works: The Impact of the Human Corps on California's Public Universities: An Evaluation for the Legislature of the Effects of Assembly Bill 1820 (Chapter 1245, Statutes of 1987)* (April 1994)
- 94-3 *A Western Compact: A Report on California's Continued Membership in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)* (April 1994)
- 94-4 *Faculty Salaries in California's Public Universities, 1994-95: A Report to the Legislature and the Governor in Response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 51 (1965)* (April 1994)
- 94-5 *Progress on Regional Academic Planning: A Staff Report to the Commission in Response to the First in a Series of Joint Reports on Regional Academic Planning by California's Public Systems of Higher Education* (April 1994)
- 94-6 *Progress on College and University Assessments of Campus Climate: A Staff Report to the California Postsecondary Education Commission* (April 1994)
- 94-7 *Will the "Three Strikes" of (1) Escalating Prison Costs, (2) An Inflexible State Budget, and (3) Frozen State Revenues Strike Down Your Children's College Chances? A Message to Every Californian from Warren Halsey Fox, Executive Director, California Postsecondary Education Commission* (April 1994)